



Twenty-third session
Item 8

DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, ITS PRESENT
INCREASING VOLUME AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Addendum to the note by the Secretary-General

Since issuance of document E/2933, the Secretary-General has received from the Government of Egypt a communication containing information concerning the implementation of the recommendations of the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, held at Geneva in 1947. The text of the communication is as follows:

Egypt

I. DOCUMENTS^{1/}

A. Passports

- (i) To enter or leave the territory of the Republic of Egypt, one must hold a valid passport or any such official travelling document in lieu of a passport which allows the person to return to the country which has issued such document.
- (ii) The Egyptian passports and related documents have recently been modified to meet all the improvements suggested by the Committee of Experts.

^{1/} The headings and numbers correspond to the text of the recommendations of the 1947 Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities reproduced in the Appendix to Annex 1 of document E/2933.

- (iii) The Committee of Experts itself indicates the impracticability of the non-immigration card which is also known as "International Passenger Card".
- Egypt does not require for entering its territory any documents other than a regular passport or any travelling document in lieu of a passport as described above under (i).
- (iv) Collective passports can be issued by the Egyptian authorities for groups travelling together provided that their number is not less than ten and does not exceed fifty persons. The fee for such collective passport is the same as an individual passport.
- (v) The Egyptian Passport is valid for two years from the date of issue and can be renewed twice, each time for two years. Therefore, the Egyptian passport could be valid for six years from the date of issue.
- (vi) The Egyptian authorities usually inscribe in the passport the countries for which this passport is valid to travel.
- (vii) The fee for issuing a new passport does not exceed the actual cost of preparation and issuing such document plus a certain amount assigned to the Tourist Department.
- (viii) The formalities for issuance or renewal of a passport have been considerably simplified. Decentralization in presenting an application for issuing or renewing a passport is adopted in a way that the applicant can submit his application to any local Egyptian authority, and not necessarily to Headquarters Offices in Cairo.

B. Visas

- (i) Temporary circumstances have made it necessary that a person wishing to leave the country obtain an exit visa.
- (ii) A foreigner travelling to or passing through Egypt must obtain and (iii) an entry or transit visa.

Such visas can be granted, in certain cases, on the spot at ports or airports of entry into Egypt.

(iv) Entry visas can be granted for several entries and re-entry visas can also be granted for several voyages.

(v) The entry visa allows the passenger to enter Egypt from any port of entry specified by law and where there are passport control points. Any entry through other than the previously mentioned ports of entry is considered illegal.

The passenger with a transit visa has also to enter Egypt from points of entry specified by law.

(vi) The nationality of the passenger or his means of transportation and (vii) are not considered basis for differentiation of visa fees.

Except for tourists, the fee for an entry visa is L.E. 1 for a single entry, and L.E. 2 for several entries. However, the principle of reciprocity in fixing entry visa fees is observed in case such fees in a foreign country exceed those established in Egypt.

Entry visas for purposes of tourism are granted at a special reduced fee of 50 piastres, irrespective of the nationality of the tourist.

The fee for a transit visa is 10 piastres for a single entry and is doubled for a transit visa with several entries. The principle of reciprocity just mentioned is also applied in respect of these visas.

(xiv) Transit visa is granted, provided the passenger applying for such a visa has a specified journey when passing through Egypt. Passengers on board, passing through the Suez Canal can leave the ship at Port Said to board again in Suez, or vice versa. In this case, ports of embarkation and disembarkation are limited to Port Said and Suez. This requires a special visa, the fee of which is 20 piastres.

II. FRONTIER FORMALITIES

B. Currency Control and Facilities for Exchanging Money

(i) Egyptian exchange control regulations in force are in conformity with the recommendation of the Committee of Experts concerning

foreign currency, traveller's cheques, and other means of payment that are allowed to tourists visiting Egypt to carry with them. In the case where Egyptian currency is withheld by Egyptian custom authorities from tourists when entering the country, this is only done to the extent of the amount exceeding the permissible limit of this currency which may be carried by travellers according to the law in force. This amount of currency is refunded to the tourist when he leaves the country. Appropriate steps are taken by the custom authorities for the purpose of such refund if the tourist's port of exit happens to be other than his port of entry, so that the refund is effected as soon as he leaves the country.

- (ii) As regards facilities of foreign exchange transactions serving tourists on arrival, steps are taken to allow representatives of authorized banks to exchange foreign currency on board tourists ships. However, this is considered a temporary arrangement pending the amendment of the exchange regulations to allow other organizations to perform such services.

C. Customs Inspection of Luggage

- (i) Custom formalities, on the whole, are considerably simplified. This has been emphasized by the Ministerial Orders No. 157 of 1953 and No. 1 of 1956, which also regulate custom exemptions. Regarding customs control, passports and medical documents inspection, these formalities are usually carried out in a consecutive order. However, in the cases where large groups of tourists arrive at the same time, custom officials are sent on board to undertake these formalities along with other department officials.
- (iii) (a) The Egyptian Government finds that she is unable to adopt the proposal which gives the option to the passenger so as to have his baggage inspected in international checking offices before his transport abroad. This proposed method was found to be in conflict with the procedure practices by the Customs Department, which requires

customs inspection to be undertaken at port of exit. It is felt that an exception to this established principle will not be practical to apply. It may also create loopholes for contraband and provide opportunities for unlawful activities. After all, there are no internal customs inspection offices in Egypt, except one in Cairo.

- (iii) (b) The competent authorities in Egypt believe that bilateral agreements to establish joint customs checking points, in order to enable passengers to have their baggage inspected inside the country of departure by customs authorities of the country of destination before actually reaching the frontiers will be useful only in the case of common inland frontiers.
- (iii) (c) Regarding the inspection of registered baggage in transit, irrespective of means of transportation, this, in the majority of cases, is not carried out. Only in limited cases, where a necessity arises, actual inspection including baggage opening is undertaken in the presence of the owners or their representatives.
- (iv) It is believed that the comprehensive and detailed declaration form which was set out by the Egyptian Department of Tourists in co-operation with the Customs Department includes all the important information that is necessary for the passengers in order to be adequately acquainted with customs and other important formalities and regulations.
